PREDICTING POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AMONG STALKING VICTIMS

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PREDICTING POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AMONG STALKING VICTIMS

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ABSTRACT

PREDICTING POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AMONG STALKING VICTIMS

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The current study aimed to understand mediators and moderators of the relationship between stalking victimization and PTSD symptomology. Using the reformulated learned helplessness theory as a model (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Reiland, Lauterbach, Harrington, & Palmieri, 2014), I predicted that participants who experienced stalking would be likely to attribute the cause of their specific stalking experience to internal, global, and stable attributions beyond their attributional styles. I also predicted that these attributions, as well as characterological self-blame, would be more likely to lead to PTSD symptomology in women, or people with feminine sex-role identities who had longer stalking experiences. While this study did not find a significant relationship between stalking victimization and PTSD, implications for the observed association between both sex-role identity and the length of the stalking episode and stalking victimization are discussed.

Keywords: Stalking, victimization, helplessness, attributional style, stalking-specific attributions, characterological self-blame, length of stalking episode, stalking frequency, and stalking distress.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Stalking is a prevalent and significant problem. An estimated 15.2% of women and 5.2% of men have experience stalking within their lifetimes (Breiding, 2015). Despite the large number of victims, there is a deficit in knowledge of the specific circumstances that influence the onset of psychological symptoms following stalking victimization.

Stalking is a harmful and aggressive form of power-based violence. According to a study by Brewster (2003), the people who were more likely to perpetrate stalking were those who attempted to exert power over their romantic partners by controlling them financially, psychologically, socially, and sexually. Furthermore, a study by Edwards and Gidycz (2014) examined the likelihood that a victim personally knew his or her stalker and found that perpetrators were often former romantic partners. Although any person can commit power-based violence, men are more likely to perpetrate, and women are more likely to be victims of stalking (Ménard & Pincus, 2012). However, little is known about the gender differences in emotional reactions to stalking. Men are underrepresented in research on power-based violence, literature on stalking being no exception. It is speculated that more information is known about female victimization because sexual assaults on a males are severely underreported, and thus, often not studied (Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2001).
Stalking typically happens for an extended period. In fact, many legislatures require the behavior be repetitive to be considered stalking (Bjerregaard, 2000). Therefore, a person must endure the stalking until the perpetrator’s behavior meets the legal definition of stalking before law enforcement can intervene.

Furthermore, the increase in social media has assisted stalking behavior. According to a study by Ménard and Pincus (2012), online stalkers were more likely to threaten to harm themselves and their victims. This is arguably a significant threat considering Bjerregaard’s (2000) finding that stalkers who threatened their victims were more likely to approach them in person.

Not surprisingly, experiencing stalking has many significant and potentially long-term effects on mental health. According to a study by Kuehner, Gass, and Dressing (2007), Major Depressive Disorder and Panic Disorder were both highly correlated with experiencing stalking. In terms of the purpose for this study, victims who were threatened by their stalkers were more likely to develop posttraumatic stress symptoms (Purcell, Pathé, & Mullen, 2005).

Although studies demonstrate a positive association between experiencing the trauma of stalking and developing Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), few studies have identified why some victims develop symptoms and others do not. Research suggests that traumatic events change a victim’s previously held assumptions about the world. When this happens, the person must then decide if the world is unsafe and unjust as it seems post-trauma or attribute the cause of the trauma to his or her own actions (Janoff-Bulman, 2004). The combined stress of the trauma, the memory of the trauma, and the new way of conceptualizing the world often cause the victim to avoid situations
with any resembling stimuli (Janoff-Bulman, 2004). As a result, the person’s anxiety about the trauma and relating stimuli go unaddressed and worsen (Janoff-Bulman, 2004).

A study by Ehlers and Clark (2000) found that the way in which the person remembers the event can cause said individual to constantly be on guard to an imminent threat. Therefore, the victim’s cognition about the trauma demonstrates the concept of event-specific attributions. This refers to an individual’s interpretations of the causes of specific negative events as opposed to an individual’s general style for interpreting the causes of negative events (Reiland, Lauterbach, Harrington, & Palmieri, 2014). Examining event-specific attributions is essential in identifying the degree to which the specific trauma facilitated PTSD development, as it would allow for examination of the disorder’s development after a specific precipitating event. This attribution could depend on the victim’s gender, sex-role identity, and length at which he or she experienced stalking.

Research on attributional styles and event-specific attributions has traditionally focused on how such cognitions influence depression. This research in the past two decades has expanded to include PTSD (Reiland et al., 2014).

A study by Fais, Zois, and Goodnight (2017) created a preliminary, moderated-mediation model to explore cognitive mechanisms (i.e., self-blame and event specific attributions) for the development of psychological distress following stalking victimization and the factors associated with when these deleterious cognitions may be more or less likely to occur (i.e., gender, sex-role identity, and length of stalking victimization). The current study attempted to expand and methodologically refine the Fais et al. (2017) study with measurement refinements and a more representative sample of university undergraduate students. It also assessed stalking as it relates to PTSD rather
than depression. In the remainder of this introduction, I will discuss the psychological consequences of stalking victimization, the potential role learned helplessness and attributional style play in the onset of such consequences, event-specific attributions and the development of PTSD, and potential moderators in said development (i.e., gender, sex-role identity, and length of stalking episode). I will end with an explanation of the current study that was designed to replicate and extend Fais et al.’s (2017) model of the sequelae associated with stalking victimization.

**Psychological Consequences of Stalking**

**Depression.** Research often focuses on the association between experiencing stalking and depression. A study of intimate partner abuse by Mechanic, Weaver, and Resick (2008) found that stalking victimization accounted for a significant portion of variance in depressive symptoms compared to other forms of intimate partner abuse. Additionally, a study by Purcell, Pathé, and Mullen (2005) further suggests that people who experienced stalking were more likely to report suicidal ideation than those who did not. While these studies show a potential relationship between stalking victimization and depression, additional studies suggest PTSD symptomology may also be related.

**PTSD.** Several studies suggest there is a relationship between stalking victimization and PTSD symptomology. For example, Basile, Arias, Desai, and Thompson (2004) examined the effects several forms of intimate partner violence had on the onset of PTSD. The results revealed that when controlling for other forms of violence including sexual assault, stalking was significantly associated with a later onset of PTSD symptoms. Basile and colleagues further found that stalking was more significantly associated with PTSD than other forms of intimate partner violence (Basile et al., 2004).
Basile and colleagues’ findings are consistent with a study by Mechanic (2004) examining the psychological effects of violence against women. This study also found that when controlling for other forms of traumatic violence, stalking was significantly associated with PTSD symptoms (Mechanic, 2004).

Additional studies examining the psychological consequences of stalking have attributed the onset of PTSD to the pervasive and persistent threats associated with stalking. Kamphuis and Emmelkamp (2001) solely examined the consequences of stalking and the likelihood of victims developing poor mental health. Their results showed that stalking victims not only demonstrated consistent declines in mental health, but they were also likely to exhibit PTSD symptoms (Kamphuis & Emmelkamp, 2001). Such research suggests that PTSD is one potential psychological sequelae of stalking victimization. Thus, it is useful to understand in greater depth factors that may account for this association. As a prominent model of negative psychological consequences of stress more broadly, learned helplessness theory may provide clues as to potential mechanisms whereby stalking may be associated with trauma symptoms.

The Role of Attributions in the Psychological Consequences of Stalking

Victimization

Researchers Seligman and Maier (1967) first developed the concept of learned helplessness when their experiments on dogs exposed to inescapable shuttle boxes resulted in the dogs learning their behavior would not stop them from experiencing a shock. According to theory and research on learned helplessness, when a person’s repeated attempts to escape distressing situations are unsuccessful, the motivation to try to escape similar situations in the future diminishes (Klein, Fencil-Morse, & Seligman,
This theory assumes that a person’s perception of controllability is central to the experience of learned helplessness. If a person perceives he or she has control over a situation’s outcome, learned helplessness is unlikely to develop. However, if a situation’s outcome is negative, as it is for stalking, and the situation is repeated, the person’s perception of control over the situation will decrease and perceived helplessness is likely to develop (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978).

Attributional Style. The perception of controllability over a situation is thought to be influenced by the individual’s attributional style. Attribution refers to the cause one assigns to both positive and negative events when the literal cause is seemingly ambiguous (Alloy, Peterson, Abramson, & Seligman, 1984). The way in which people attribute or assign a cause to an event typically aligns with three general dimensions: stable versus unstable, internal versus external, and global versus specific (Abramson et al., 1978).

The stability of a person’s attributional style can be defined as the degree to which the person perceives the cause of the event or helplessness is likely to change. The internality of an attribution refers to the person’s general likelihood he or she will blame the cause of negative events on an internal trait or on an external stimulus (Abramson et al., 1978). Finally, the globality of an attribution is the degree to which a person may generalize the cause of the event to also being the cause of other negative experiences.

Even though the original learned helplessness model provided a foundation towards future research in assigning causality, it was insufficient in describing how learned helplessness related to human cognition and contributed to mental health (Abramson et al., 1978). In response to these limitations, Abramson, Seligman, and
Teasdale (1978) developed the reformulated learned helplessness model. Based on the attribution theory, this model emphasizes stable and global attributions over internal attributions when considering psychological consequences to a seemingly uncontrollable situation.

**Classic application to depression.** Research has traditionally focused on depression resulting from learned helplessness. This model identified three dimensions in which attributions and attributional styles facilitate learned helplessness and thus result in depression. Metalsky, Halberstadt, and Abramson (1987) asserted that people with stable, internal, and global attributions were more likely to develop depression. Furthermore, the Greening, Stoppelbein, and Docter (2002) study on earthquake survivors found that attributional style served as a mediator between traumatic experiences and depression. It did not, however, find the same relationship with PTSD. Even still, studies have shown that those who present with PTSD might also experience symptoms that are associated with anxiety and mood disorders (Elwood, Hahn, Olatunji, & Williams, 2009). The existing literature examining the association between learned helplessness and depression and the inclusion of symptoms consistent with PTSD provides a basis for understanding the etiology of PTSD in stalking victims (Elwood et al., 2009).

**Recent application to PTSD.** According to Elwood and colleagues (2009), there is more research that explains the etiology of depression and anxiety than there is for PTSD. Given the similarities in symptomatology for depression and PTSD, it is likely that an examination of the vulnerabilities that lead to depression are influential in PTSD development as well. As a result, Elwood et al. identified four such contributions: negative attributional style, rumination (i.e., the act of continuously thinking about
negative events, the factors that caused them, and the resulting emotions), anxiety sensitivity (i.e., as the fear of anxiety sensations and anxiety-eliciting situations), and looming cognitive style (i.e., the way in which a person encodes information and determines the amount of threat the current or future situations pose; Elwood et al., 2009).

Rather than examining all four cognitive risk factors, the current study focused specifically on negative attributional style’s role in the development of trauma symptoms. According to Elwood et al. (2009), negative attributional style refers to an individual’s tendency to identify the cause to a negative event over which he or she perceives no control to internal, stable, and global factors. This attributional style has not only been linked to the development to feelings of hopelessness and depression, but it has also shown a consistent relation to PTSD symptom development (Elwood et al., 2009). Furthermore, there is a strong and consistent association between experiencing interpersonal violence and negative attributional style (Elwood et al., 2009).

Additional studies, however, found inconsistent results with the degree to which negative attributional style is associated with PTSD development. For example, Elwood et al. (2009) noted several studies that failed to find an association with PTSD and negative attributional style. They also reported studies that found that those who attributed the cause of a negative event to an external factor were more likely to develop PTSD than those who exhibited internal attributions. These results further extend to the possibility that event-specific attributions are significant to the onset of PTSD symptomology (Elwood et al., 2009).

**Event-Specific Attributions**
Despite its more inclusive and representative model, the reformulated learned helplessness model has far to go in including a comprehensive understanding of attributional style, event-specific attributions, and PTSD (Reiland et al., 2014). As previously explained, event-specific attributions refer to the tendency for a person to determine the cause of a specific event in a certain way. Given the DSM-5 criteria for a precipitating event or series of events for PTSD development, it is essential to examine the potential relationship between the traumatic event and its resultant cognitions. In an initial 2006 study on causal attributions and PTSD by Reiland, the results showed that event-specific attributions were more strongly associated with PTSD than exhibiting other broad attributional styles. A follow-up study found consistent findings such that stable, internal, and global event-specific attributions were significant in predicting PTSD (Reiland et al., 2014). This suggests that there is merit to the assertion that PTSD etiology in part be tied to event-specific attributions.

Although there are few studies to demonstrate the relationship between event-specific attributions and PTSD’s predictability, studies on treatment effects of PTSD suggest that focusing on the cognition about the trauma are essential to recovery. This, in turn, could describe an important component to understanding what causes PTSD after experiencing stalking. In the book *Trauma and Recovery* (1997), author Judith Herman, M.D. describes the victim’s natural tendency to compartmentalize the memory and attempt to approach life like the trauma never happened. This practice, however, delays the victim’s recovery. Instead, she argues that acknowledging and working through each existing memory of the event is a crucial step towards addressing the victim’s cognition about the trauma and eventual relief of PTSD symptoms. It is arguable this approach is
effective due to the event-specific nature of the victim’s attribution. However, more research is needed to definitively identify event-specific attributions as a causal factor in PTSD development.

**Stalking-specific attributions and trauma.** Just as there is a deficit of knowledge about the relationship between event-specific attributions and PTSD, few studies examine stalking-specific attributions. According to a study by Halligan, Clark, and Ehlers (2002), traumatic events are not processed efficiently. In terms of the attribution theory, a stalking victim with a stable attribution would likely believe the driving factor behind the perpetrator’s actions cannot and will not change (Reiland et al., 2014). As a result, the victim’s perception of the experience as well as his or her understanding of its cause is unlikely to change. This is far more feasible than adopting an unstable attribution in which the belief that the perpetrator’s motivating factor will change (Greening et al., 2002).

**Characterological and behavioral self-blame.** One way in which individuals attribute the cause to a specific event is through self-blame. Janoff-Bulman (1979) noted that such an attribution can manifest in any one of two ways: characterological or behavioral. Characterological self-blame refers to an individual’s tendency to endorse an internal characteristic such as inaptitude, whereas behavioral self-blame refers to the person’s behavior and what he or she failed to do to change the situation (Janoff-Bulman, 1979). In a study on attributions rape victims make regarding their assaults, Frazier (1990) found most victims blamed both their behavior and character to various degrees, but more significantly blamed their rapists for the assault. Results further showed that characterological and behavioral self-blame were significantly correlated with the onset
of depression. However, further research is necessary to determine whether these results extend to PTSD (Frazier, 1990).

**Possible Moderators of the Relationship between Stalking Victimization and Event-Specific Attributions.**

**Gender.** One purpose of the current study is to identify how gender is associated with event-specific attributions among stalking victims. What little research has been done on gender differences in stalking suggests women reported experiencing higher levels of persistent fear than men after a stalking episode (Sheridan & Lyndon, 2012). The same study also found that women were significantly more likely to endure other psychological consequences such as depression, anxiety, irritability, increased distrust, and paranoia after experiencing stalking than men (Sheridan & Lyndon, 2012).

In view of the relative dearth of research on gender differences in stalking, examining studies on gender and other forms of power-based violence may provide useful clues as to the role of gender in the development of trauma symptoms following stalking victimization.

In a 25-year-long meta-analysis on PTSD prevalence between men and women, Tolin and Foa (2006) found that when excluding sexual assault, men were more likely to experience potentially traumatic events but women were more likely to meet the criteria for PTSD; thus suggesting a significant gender difference in susceptibility to developing the disorder. Moreover, a study on sex abuse adjustment over the span of a year found that women were not only more likely to meet criteria for PTSD, but they were also more likely to experience more severe symptoms than men (Feiring, Taska, & Lewis, 2002).
With respect to gender differences in attributions following a trauma, a study by Hunter, Goodwin, and Wilson (1992) found that female victims of child abuse were likely to attribute the cause of the abuse perpetrators while male victims did not show a significant difference in their tendencies to assign cause internally or externally – suggesting a gender difference in the way in which men and women interpret trauma. Given that child abuse and stalking are both forms of power-based violence, it is plausible a gender difference in attributions for stalking could also exist. Moreover, a person’s gender may moderate the relationship between stalking victimization and both event-specific attributions and characterological self-blame. Given the gender difference found in the Hunter et al. (1992) study, it is worth further examination to see if women as opposed to men more significantly affect the relationship between stalking victimization and both helplessness attributions and self-blame.

**Sex-role identity.** Sex-role identity might also serve as a moderator of the relationship between stalking victimization and both event specific attributions and self-blame. Sex-role identity refers to socially defined stereotypes and traits expected to be endorsed by men or women (Spence & Helmreich, 1978). Masculine traits are thought to encompass instrumental behaviors such as being self-confident, active, independent, competitive, and decisive. In contrast, feminine traits are thought to include expressive behaviors such as being devoted to others, helpful to others, warm, gentle, and emotional (Spence, 1983; Spence & Buckner, 2000).

In terms of the relationship between sex-role identity and attributions following being a victim of power-based violence, a study on the effects of sex-role identity and rape attribution found that people who endorse traditional sex-role identities were more
likely to attribute the victim in hypothetical rape scenarios as having more control over the outcome than those who did not endorse stereotypical sex-role identities (Krulwitz & Payne, 1978). Again, these results may extend to stalking victimization as stalking and rape are both forms of power-based violence. However, additional research is needed to examine the degree to which sex-role identity moderates stalking-specific attributions.

**Length.** Additionally, the length of stalking is likely to influence the way in which a victim internalizes the stalking experience. A survey of Belgian stalking victims revealed a significant relationship between longer stalking episodes and distressing psychological consequences (Galeazzi, Bučar-Ručman, DeFazio, & Groenen, 2009). Path and Mullen (1997) support this claim showing that victims of persistent stalking were more likely to meet criteria for PTSD. Furthermore, a study by Mullen, Mackenzie, Ogloff, Pathé, McEwan, and Purcell (2006) on risk assessment in stalking situations found that the longer a stalking episode continued, the greater risk for psychological harm. Moreover, Kamphuis and Emmelkamp (2001) found that people who experienced stalking for more than two years were more likely to experience PTSD symptoms than those who experienced other forms of trauma. Additional studies are necessary to examine whether the length of the stalking episode moderates the relationship between stalking victimization and both stalking-specific attributions and characterological self-blame. It is possible that those who experience longer episodes of stalking victimization will be more likely to exhibit helpless event-specific attributions.

**The Proposed Study**

This study investigated a moderated-mediation model predicting trauma symptoms among stalking victims (see Figure 1). This model represents a
methodologically refined version of the Fais, Zois, and Goodnight (2017) study that examined stalking victimization and depression. Based on the Reformulated Learned Helplessness model, Fais et al. (2017) hypothesized that attributional style and self-blame would mediate the association between stalking victimization and depression. Furthermore, length of stalking episode, sex, and sex-role identity were predicted to moderate the association between stalking victimization and helplessness. In addition to examining the association between stalking victimization and PTSD rather than depression, the current study differed in the methodological approach to measuring the moderation piece of their moderated-mediation model, thus allowing for a better test of Fais and colleagues’ hypotheses.

The Fais et al. (2017) study did not find evidence for the moderation piece of the moderated-mediation model. This, however, is likely due to methodological limitations that may have precluded the results. Therefore, I attempted to improve upon these limitations by aiming to perform a cross-sectional analysis comparing first-year undergraduates in an introductory psychology course with third and four-year undergraduate students at medium-sized, private mid-western institution. I also aimed to improve measures used by utilizing a measure of stalking that assesses frequency and intensity separately and analyze items from the Bem Sex Role Inventory short form, which is thought to be a purer measure of instrumental versus expressive traits.

The current study was also similar to the above discussed study by Reiland and colleagues (2014) but differed in key ways. While Reiland and colleagues’ (2014) study was similar to mine in that I also examined both event specific attributions and global attributional style, it differed from mine in that Reiland et al. examined general trauma
while I studied trauma that was specifically related to stalking victimization. Also, I used the PCL-5 measure of PTSD symptoms. This is an important difference in that it assesses PTSD symptoms as classified by the DSM-5. Reiland et al. used the PCL-4 in their study, which assesses PTSD symptoms as classified by the DSM-IV.

The DSM-5 classification is a notable distinction in that it marked several changes in the diagnostic criteria. Of interest in the current study, the DSM-IV had a broad Criterion C that is split in two more specific symptom clusters in the DSM-5. Criterion C is now comprised of avoidance symptoms and Criterion D addresses negative alterations in cognition and mood associated with the precipitating event. Furthermore, a new Criterion E is composed of marked alterations in arousal and reactivity and added reckless or self-destructive behavior as a symptom (Kilpatrick, Resnick, Milanak, Miller, Keyes, & Friedman, 2013). Therefore, mediation may be a function of the specific class of symptoms assessed. For instance, more strong support for mediation may exist with a specific symptom set of negative alterations in cognition and mood than the other symptom categories of PTSD.

![Moderated-mediation model of stalking victimization and PTSD.](image)

*Figure 1. Moderated-mediation model of stalking victimization and PTSD.*
**Hypotheses**

Regarding existing literature, the following hypotheses were proposed:

**Hypothesis 1:** There would be significant, positive relationships between stalking victimization and PTSD symptomology.

**Hypothesis 2:** The relationship between stalking victimization and PTSD symptomology would be mediated by event-specific attributions and characterological self-blame. These mediators would be significant when statistically controlling for the three dimensions of negative or helpless attributional style.

**Hypothesis 3:** The association between stalking victimization and mediators (i.e. event-specific attributions and characterological self-blame) would be moderated by the length of the stalking episode and participants’ sex identification and sex-role identity. That is, there would be a stronger association between stalking victimization and both helplessness attributions and characterological self-blame when the duration of stalking is longer, the victim is female, or the victim has a feminine sex-role identity.
CHAPTER II

METHOD

Participants

Participants were recruited from upper-level psychology and sociology courses as well as an introductory psychology course at a medium-sized university in the mid-west. Compensation for participating in the study included extra credit for the upper-level courses and course credit for the introductory psychology course. The 82 total participants were comprised of 68 women, 14 men, 91.5% of whom identified as white and 8.5% of whom identified as a race other than white. Additionally, 9.8% were 19 years old, 35.4% were 20 years old, 22% were 21 years old, and 32.9% were 22 years or older. Abnormal psychology students comprised 48.8% of participants while 29.3% were from a Psychology of Human Sexuality course and 22% were from a sociology senior seminar course. Among the participants, 46.3% reported having experienced someone giving them unwanted attention more than once while 50% denied any such experience. Furthermore, 9% of participants reported that the repeated and unwanted attention negatively impacted their daily lives while 69% said their daily lives were not affected.

Measures

Demographics. Demographic information (Appendix A) was placed at the beginning of the questionnaire and assessed participants’ age, gender, and race.
Sex Role. The Bem Sex Role Inventory Short Form was used to assess sex-role identity. Derived from the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), the BSRI short form was comprised of half of the original BSRI (Choi, Fuqua, & Newman, 2009). The BSRI short form consisted of 30 items, 10 of which indicated masculinity, 10 indicated femininity, and 10 indicated social desirability. Each item was on a 7-point scale (e.g. 1 = “never or almost never true” to 7 = “always to almost always true”; Choi & Fuqua, 2003). In the main analyses, the masculinity and femininity subscales were analyzed separately. Despite it having fewer items, the BSRI short form consistently shows either consistent or higher rates of reliability and validity (Choi & Fuqua, 2003; Campbell, Gillapsy, and Thompson, 1997). In a comparison of the long and short forms, Campbell et al. (1997) found that in terms of reliability, the alpha for the long masculinity scale ranged from .86 to .87 while the alpha for the short masculinity scale ranged from .84 to .86. The femininity scales, on the other hand, showed a more significant difference with the alpha for the long scale ranging from .75 to .78 and the short scale ranging from .84 to .87 (Campbell et al., 1997).

PTSD. The Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist for the DSM-5 (PCL-5; Appendix B) was used to assess the DSM-5 criteria for PTSD. This was a 20-item questionnaire with each item representing a different aspect to a PTSD symptom on a scale from 0 (not at all severe) to 4 (extremely severe) (Blevins, Weathers, Davis, Witte, & Domino, 2015). The measure included 5 items that represent DSM-5 symptoms of intrusive or dissociative thoughts (e.g., “Repeated, disturbing, and unwanted memories of the stressful experience?”), 2 items that represented symptoms of avoidance (e.g., “Avoiding memories, thoughts, or feelings related to the stressful experience?”), 7 items
that represented symptoms of negative alterations in mood and cognitions associated with the event (e.g., Trouble remembering important parts of the stressful experience?”), and 6 items that represented symptoms of alterations in arousal and reactivity associated with the event (e.g., Irritable behavior, angry outbursts, or acting aggressively?”) (Weathers, Litz, Keane, Palmieri, Marx, & Schnurr, 2013). Therefore, scores on the PCL-5 ranged from 0-80, depending on the degree to which participants endorsed each item. A summed score of 33 meets criteria for a PTSD diagnosis (Weathers et al., 2013). The current study utilized the total score for the primary analyses and the four subscales for follow-up analyses.

Tests of reliability primarily focused on test-retest, parallel forms, and internal consistency. In one study, participants took the test twice with a week in between each session. The results showed statistically consistent scores between testing sessions. Furthermore, a study on test-retest reliability by Blevins et al. (2015) found that the PCL-5 had more significant test-retest reliability than the original PCL. This study also demonstrated that the PCL-5 has high internal consistency (α = .95; Blevins et al., 2015).

Tests of validity primarily focused on construct validity regarding convergent and discriminant validity. Studies consistently show high correlations between the PCL-5 and similar measures such as the earlier version of the PCL, the Posttraumatic Diagnostic Scale (PDS), and the Detailed Assessment of Posttraumatic Stress (DAPS). These tests also show moderate correlations between items on the Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI) that are not associated with trauma such as depression (Blevins et al., 2015).

**Self-Blame.** The Behavioral and Characterological Self-Blame Scale (BCSB; O’Neill & Kerig, 2000) was comprised of 12 items that originally assessed the amount
and type of self-blame victims of domestic violence attributed to their experiences. Out of the 12 items, 6 asked participants to rate their agreement to statements regarding behavioral self-blame (e.g., “It happened because of something I did”) and 6 asked participants to rate their agreement to statements regarding characterological self-blame (e.g., “It happened because of the kind of person I am”). Each item was rated on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). O’Neill and Kerig (2000) found Cronbach’s alphas of .71 and .79 for the behavioral and characterological self-blame subscales, respectively.

Fais et al. (2017) modified the BCSB to specifically assess self-blame in relation to stalking victimization. The current study used the same modification. They used the sum of the characterological self-blame subscale to assess self-blame regarding stalking victimization and found a Cronbach’s alpha of .79. The BCSB can be found in Appendix C.

**Stalking Experience.** The Stalking and Harassment Behaviour Scale (SHBS; Turmanis & Brown, 2006) was used to assess whether a participant had experienced stalking, the degree to which they found the stalking experience distressing and frequency of the stalking episode. The measure was comprised of 42 stalking behaviors that participants were encouraged to rate the frequency of each on a scale from 1 (hardly ever) to 10 (all the time). Each item was also assessed for the degree of distress it caused the victim on a scale from 1 (not at all disturbed/scared) to 10 (extremely disturbed/scared). The measure was then split in to two subscales: the total amount of harassing behavior (THB; e.g., “How often [they] telephoned you at work”) and the subjective distress scores (SDS; e.g., “How disturbed or scared [were you when they]
telephoned you at work.” The level of stalking (LOS) was then calculated by multiplying the frequency of each behavior by the level of subjective distress associated with each behavior and adding each value to find a total LOS (Turmanis & Brown, 2006). This total LOS score was used in the primary analyses as the predictor variable in the model, while item 9 was used to assess the hypothesized moderator variable of the length of the stalking experience.

Initial tests of split-half reliability show coefficients of .84 and .81 for the THB scale and .86 and .90 for the SDS scale. Additionally, Cronbach’s alphas for both subscales were above .90. Construct validity was also assessed using correlations between each item of the two subscales and the LOS. These coefficients ranged from $r = .20$ to $r = .69$ (Turmanis & Brown, 2006). Despite its psychometric advantages, the SHBS does not measure social media stalking victimization. Therefore, two items to address these potential experiences online (e.g., Contacted you through Facebook or other social media) were added. The SHBS as well as the additional items can be found in Appendix D.

**Short Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire.** The short Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire (EASQ-S; Whitley, 1991) is a shortened version of the Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire. It was developed as the third version of the original Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ) that aimed to assess attributional style as defined by the reformulated learned helplessness model with research supporting its greater reliability and validity (Peterson & Villanova, 1988). In an attempt to address the ASQ’s limitations with reliability, an expanded version of the measure was developed (Peterson & Villanova, 1988). The EASQ-S is comprised of the 12 most reliable items on
the expanded ASQ. Participants were given 12 hypothetical bad events and asked to imagine they were happening to them. They are then asked to assess the extent to which they rate the internality or externality (locus; 1 = “externality” and 7 = “internality”) of the cause of an event, the stability of maintaining this viewpoint (1 = “instability” and 7 = “stability”), and the globality to this viewpoint (1 = “specificity” and 7 = “globality”; Peterson & Villanova, 1988). Chronbach’s alpha, intercorrelations, and correlations with a short form of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory Depression scale were calculated and found similar results as the EASQ. These results included Chronbach’s alphas of .65 for the locus subscale, .79 for the stability subscale, and .87 for the globality subscale. These compare to the EASQ’s .71, .86, and .87, respectively. However, Whitley (1991) noted limitations in the reliability for the locus subscale (Whitley, 1991). The EASQ-S can be found in Appendix E.

**Event-Specific Attribution.** The measure to assess event-specific attributions was similar to the one used in the Fais et al. (2017) study with few modifications. Fais et al. (2017) assessed whether participants affirmatively endorsed an item from the Obsessive Relational Intrusion (ORI) measure and asked additional questions following the format of the Attributional Style Questionnaire (Abramson et al., 1978). These additional questions first had the participant assign a cause to the event described in the ORI item. Then participants rated the internality versus externality, stability versus instability, and globality versus specificity on three 7-point scales. The ASQ has shown subscale reliability with Cronbach’s alphas of .70 or higher, suggesting it is also a reliable measure from which to base the event-specific attribution measure. The current study used the same format and 7-point scales as the Fais et al. (2017) study, but instead asked
participants whether they endorsed an item on the SHBS (e.g. “For whatever reasons have you ever had someone (known or unknown) give you unwanted attention MORE THAN ONCE either by letters, notes left for you, e-mails, phone calls, faxes, following you, attempts to approach you, driving by your home, sending you gifts, or finding information about you?”; Turmanis & Brown, 2006). This measure can be found in Appendix F.

**Procedure**

Participants from the introductory psychology course were recruited through an online recruitment tool called SONA where they were able to sign up for intended study times. Regarding the students from the upper level classes, participants were recruited through a brief three-minute recruitment speech that was be given in a variety of upper-level psychology courses. If their instructor allowed it, participants were given extra credit in the course from which they were recruited. All students who agreed to participate by reading and signing the informed consent received printed packets containing the measures for the study. Participants first filled out the demographics questionnaire, followed by the BSRI-short form, the PCL-5, the BCSB, the SHBS, the EASQ-S, and the event-specific attribution measure in that order. Participants completed the full battery in less than an hour. When completed, participants returned their packets to the researcher and received debriefing information. Course credit or extra credit (depending on whether the student was recruited from an introductory versus upper-level psychology course) was granted in exchange for participation regardless of their completion of the full battery. Participants were permitted to withdraw from the study at
any time. This study was reviewed and approved by the appropriate Institutional Review Board.
CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

All descriptive statistics for the primary variables can be found in Table 1 below. Preliminary analyses were conducted to determine whether there were significant group differences within the demographic variables (i.e., age and race/ethnicity) on the criterion variable of PTSD symptomology. An independent-samples t-test was calculated to determine whether there was a significant difference between participants who identified as white and those who as a race other than white in PTSD symptoms. The results showed that there was not a significant difference between races in PTSD symptoms, $t(79) = -1.81, p > .05$. Additionally, a one-way ANOVA was calculated assessing for possible age differences in PTSD symptoms. The results showed that there was not a significant difference between the participants’ ages in PTSD symptomology, $F(3,77) = .57, p > .05$. Therefore, age and race/ethnicity were not controlled for in the main study analyses.
Table 1
*Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Study Variables (N = 82)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min-Max</th>
<th>α</th>
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</thead>
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<td>.95</td>
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<td>StDis</td>
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<td>.94</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking Specific: Globality</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking Specific: Stability</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>0 – 7</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* StFrq = Stalking and Harassment Behaviour Scale, “How often [stalking and harassment] occurred; StDis = Stalking and Harassment Behaviour Scale, “How disturbed or scared were you”; EASQ Internality = Short Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire internality subscale; EASQ Stability = Short Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire stability subscale; EASQ Globality = Short Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire globality subscale; Bem Masculinity = Bem Sex-role Inventory masculinity subscale; Bem Femininity = Bem Sex-role Inventory femininity subscale; Self-Blame = Modified Behavioral and Categorical Self-Blame Scale; PTSD Total = PCL-5 Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist for the DSM 5; Stalking Specific Internality = Modified Attributional Style Questionnaire item 2; Stalking Specific: Globality = Modified Attributional Style Questionnaire item 3; Stalking Specific: Stability = Modified Attributional Style Questionnaire item 4.
Primary Analyses

Hypothesis 1. My first hypothesis stated that there would be a significant relationship between stalking victimization and PTSD symptomology. To test this prediction, I computed a zero-order correlation between stalking victimization and PTSD symptoms. To measure stalking victimization, two subscales were used; one assessing stalking frequency and another assessing the degree to which the stalking behavior was distressing. These two subscales were used for all analyses involving stalking victimization. The results of the zero-order correlation between stalking frequency and PTSD symptoms as well as stalking distress and PTSD symptoms were not significant. These correlation coefficients, as well as those for all primary variables can be found in Table 2.

Hypotheses 2 and 3. Hypotheses 2 and 3 stated that the relationship between stalking victimization and PTSD symptomology would be mediated by event-specific attributions and characterological self-blame and that the association between stalking victimization and the mediators would be moderated by the length of stalking episode, and participants’ gender and sex-role identity. Initially, I proposed that I would test these two hypotheses using a moderated-mediation model using Preacher and Hayes' (2004) bootstrapping method. However, because PTSD symptoms were not significantly correlated with the proposed mediators or the predictor variables of stalking frequency and distress, the entire model was not run. As indicated in Table 2, stalking frequency and stalking distress were significantly correlated with some mediators, therefore, I did examine the hypothesis that length and sex-role identity would moderate the relationship between stalking and the proposed mediators. Gender was not examined as a moderator
because a series of independent sample t-tests failed to reveal significant gender differences in either stalking victimization or any of the proposed mediators.

A total of eight regression equations were conducted examining stalking frequency and stalking distress as predictors with moderators including the three stalking-specific attributions (i.e. internal, stable, and global) or self-blame as criterion variables. Separate equations were run for each of the four criterion variables. Additionally, the predictors of stalking frequency and stalking distress were analyzed separately. The predictor variables and proposed moderators were mean centered prior to creating the interaction terms in order to reduce the chances of problems with multicollinearity (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). In the first four regression equations, stalking frequency was used as the predictor variable. In the first step of the regression equation, the main effects of stalking frequency, length, masculine sex-role identity, and feminine sex-role identity were entered as predictor variables. In the second step, the interaction terms of Stalking Frequency x Length, Stalking Frequency x Masculine Sex-Role Identity, and Stalking Frequency x Feminine Sex-Role Identity were entered. The overall results for this model showed that the $R^2$ change on the second steps for each regression were not significant. These results can be found in Tables 3-6. However, as noted in Table 6, the specific interaction of Stalking Frequency x Femininity was significant in the prediction of behavioral self-blame. Using the Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken (2003) method, the interaction was decomposed. The results indicated that stalking frequency was significantly associated with characterological self-blame at both one standard deviation above ($\beta = .42, t(78) = 2.45, p < .05$) and below the mean on femininity ($\beta = .92, t(78) = 2.47, p < .05$). When using two standard deviations, stalking frequency was
not significantly associated with characterological self-blame above the mean on femininity \((\beta = .17, t(78) = 1.50, p > .05)\), but stalking frequency was significantly associated with characterological self-blame below the mean on femininity \((\beta = 1.18, t(78) = 2.43, p < .05)\).

Four additional regressions equations were run with stalking distress as the predictor variable, thus changing the interaction terms to Stalking Distress x Length, Stalking Distress x Masculine Sex-Role Identity, and Stalking Distress x Feminine Sex-Role Identity. Internal, stable, and global stalking-specific attributions as well as behavioral self-blame criterion variables did not have significant \(R^2\) change values in the second steps. The results of these regressions can be found in Tables 7-10.
Table 2
Zero-Order Correlations for Primary Study Variables (N = 82)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
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<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. StDis.</td>
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<td>2. StFrq.</td>
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<td>3. PTSD</td>
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<td>4. EASQ Internality</td>
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<td>5. EASQ Stability</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.66**</td>
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<td>6. EASQ Globality</td>
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<td>.66**</td>
<td>.75**</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Stalking Internality</td>
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<td>.52**</td>
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<td>.08</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<td>8. Stalking Globality</td>
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<td>.18</td>
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<td>.12</td>
<td>.72**</td>
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<td>9. Stalking Stability</td>
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<td>.46**</td>
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<td>-.04</td>
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<td>.09</td>
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<td>.87**</td>
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</tr>
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<td>10. Length</td>
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<td>.47**</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.57**</td>
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<td>11. Masc.</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.24*</td>
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<td>12. Fem.</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
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<td>.46**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.54**</td>
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<td>-.01</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
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<td>.11</td>
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<td>-.10</td>
<td>.06</td>
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Note. StDis = Stalking and Harassment Behaviour Scale, “How disturbed or scared were you”; StFrq = Stalking and Harassment Behaviour Scale, “How often [stalking and harassment] occurred; PTSD Total = PCL-5 Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist for the DSM 5; EASQ Internality = Short Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire internality subscale; EASQ Stability = Short Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire stability subscale; EASQ Globality = Short Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire globality subscale; Bem Masculinity = Bem Sex-role Inventory masculinity subscale; Bem Femininity = Bem Sex-Role Inventory femininity subscale; Stalking Internality = Modified Attributional Style Questionnaire item 2; Stalking Globality = Modified Attributional Style Questionnaire item 3; Stalking Stability = Modified Attributional Style Questionnaire item 4; Self-Blame = Modified Behavioral and Categorical Self-Blame Scale.

*p < .05. **p < .01
Table 3
Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Stalking Frequency Predicting Stalking-Specific Internal Attributions (N = 82)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step and Predictor Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stalking Frequency</td>
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<td>.35</td>
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<td>Length</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.38**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Masculinity</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>-.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Femininity</td>
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<td>.21</td>
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<td>Step 2:</td>
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<td>Stalking Frequency by Length</td>
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<td>Stalking Frequency by Masculinity</td>
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<td>-.01</td>
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<td>Stalking Frequency by Femininity</td>
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</table>

Note. *p < .05, **p < .001.

Table 4
Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Stalking Frequency Predicting Stalking-Specific Stable Attributions (N = 82)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Step and Predictor Variables</th>
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<th>R²</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
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<td>.12</td>
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<td>Femininity</td>
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<td>Step 2:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stalking Frequency by Length</td>
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<td>.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stalking Frequency by Femininity</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.28</td>
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</table>

Note. *p < .05, **p < .001.
Table 5  
Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Stalking Frequency Predicting Stalking-Specific Global Attributions (N = 82)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step and Predictor Variables</th>
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<th>SE B</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
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</thead>
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<td>.43</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Femininity</td>
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<td>.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 2:</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Stalking Frequency by Length</td>
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<td>-.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stalking Frequency by Masculinity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stalking Frequency by Femininity</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>-.03</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. No significant variables at p < .05.  
**p < .001.

Table 6  
Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Stalking Frequency Predicting Behavioral Self-Blame (N = 82)

<table>
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<th>SE B</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>R²</th>
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<td>.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Femininity</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 2:</td>
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<td>.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-.69</td>
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Note. *p < .05.
Table 7
Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Stalking Distress Predicting Stalking-Specific Internal Attributions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Step and Predictor Variables</th>
<th>$B$</th>
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<td>.37**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculinity</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Femininity</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.20</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking Distress by Masculinity</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking Distress by Femininity</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.25</td>
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Note. No significant variables at $p < .05$.  
**$p < .001$.  

Table 8
Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Stalking Distress Predicting Stalking-Specific Stable Attributions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Step and Predictor Variables</th>
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<th>$SE$</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>.42**</td>
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<td>Stalking Distress</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.26*</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Masculinity</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>.12</td>
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<td>Femininity</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.01</td>
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<td>.07</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking Distress by Masculinity</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>-.01</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking Distress by Femininity</td>
<td>.00</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *$p < .05$, **$p < .001$.  

### Table 9
*Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Stalking Distress Predicting Stalking-Specific Global Attributions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step and Predictor Variables</th>
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<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td><strong>Step 1:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
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<td>.14</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Masculinity</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Femininity</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.12</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking Distress by Length</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking Distress by Masculinity</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Stalking Distress by Femininity</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.02</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* *p* < .05, **p* < .001.

### Table 10
*Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Stalking Distress Predicting Behavioral Self-Blame*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step and Predictor Variables</th>
<th>$B$</th>
<th>$SE$</th>
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<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td><strong>Step 1:</strong></td>
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<td>Femininity</td>
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<td>.18</td>
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<td><strong>Step 2:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking Distress by Length</td>
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<td>.08</td>
<td>-.07</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking Distress by Masculinity</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking Distress by Femininity</td>
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<td>-.55</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>

*Note.* No significant variables at $p < .05.$
CHAPTER IV
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine potential moderators and mediators of the relationship between stalking victimization and PTSD symptomology. A central aim of this study was to better identify factors that facilitate PTSD symptom development following a stalking experience using the reformulated learned helplessness model as a guide (Reiland et al., 2014). Results showed that, apart from Hypothesis 3, the main hypotheses were not supported. In partial support of Hypothesis 3, there was a significant Stalking Frequency x Femininity interaction in the prediction of behavioral self-blame. However, a decomposition of this interaction revealed that the effect was in the opposite direction as predicted. Throughout the discussion, I will cover the implications for each hypothesis, limitations to the current study, and implications for future research.

Hypothesis 1

My first hypothesis was that there would be a significant and positive relationship between stalking victimization and PTSD symptomology. Inconsistent with existing research, this study did not find a significant correlation between stalking distress or stalking frequency and PTSD symptomology. Studies such as one by Mechanic, Uhlmansiek, Weaver, and Resick (2000) examining the impact of severe stalking experiences by battered women found that PTSD symptoms were significantly and positively correlated with stalking experiences. Another study by Dardis, Amoroso, and
Iverson (2017) on female veterans who experienced stalking found that when controlling for previous trauma, veterans who experienced stalking were significantly more likely to display PTSD symptomology according to the PCL-5 than those who did not. Additionally, in a study on forgiveness after experiencing stalking and PTSD symptom development, researchers Baldry, Cinquegrana, Regalia, and Crapolicchio (2017) found that participants who did not forgive their stalkers were more likely to experience PTSD symptomology. Furthermore, the previously noted Kamphuis and Emmelkamp (2001) study found that participants, particularly female participants, who experienced stalking and harassment were more likely to develop psychological disorders including PTSD. Given that several studies have consistently shown a significant relationship between stalking victimization and PTSD symptomology (Edwards & Gidycz, 2014; Basile et al., 2004) this study’s failure to find a significant relationship between stalking victimization and PTSD symptomology was unexpected. These inconsistencies may be due to the fact that this study had 82 participants, which is significantly less than the number of participants in other studies. They may also be due to limitations with the measure used to assess stalking victimization – which will be discussed more in depth in the limitations section of this paper.

**Hypothesis 2**

My second hypothesis stated that the relationship between stalking victimization and PTSD symptomology would be mediated by stalking-specific attributions and characterological self-blame. Mediation was not tested because of the lack of the observed relationship between the stalking victimization variables and PTSD symptoms, and between the proposed mediators and PTSD symptoms. In the remainder
of this section, I will discuss the implications of the simple zero-order correlations among the primary study variables.

As noted in my results, both predictor variables (stalking frequency and stalking distress) were significantly correlated with stalking-specific internal, global, and stable attributions, while PTSD symptomology was not significantly correlated with any of the predicted mediators. Additionally, this study failed to find a significant relationship between characterological self-blame and stalking victimization or PTSD symptomology. While these results were unexpected, they are fairly consistent with existing research. The previously mentioned Frazier (1990) study examined sexual assault and the degree to which victims blame themselves or their attackers for the assault. Their results showed that while some victims blamed themselves, the majority placed most of the blame for the attack on their assailants. The Frazier (1990) study may help to explain the co-occurring significant relationship between stalking victimization and stalking-specific internal, global, and stable attributions with the lack of significance between stalking victimization and characterological self-blame. According to the reformulated learned helplessness model, the stalking-specific attributions may occur to the degree that the victim learned he or she does not have control over the stalking. While the significant relationship between stalking victimization and stalking-specific internal attributions may seem inconsistent with the lack of a significant relationship between stalking victimization and characterological self-blame, the reformulated learned helplessness model suggests that while the stalking-specific internal attribution may account for a degree of learned helplessness, it does not mean that the victim would blame a characterological trait to have caused the stalking entirely (Reiland et al., 2014; Janoff-Bulman, 1979). Similarly, a
study examining potential mediators to the relationship between sexual abuse and psychological disorders found evidence many variables to serve as mediators, but not self-blame (Ullman, Peter-Hagene, & Relyea, 2014).

Even though some of the findings can be explained through existing research, this study’s failure to find a significant relationship between PTSD symptomology and the predicted mediators is not consistent with existing research. For example, in a study on coping responses to sexual abuse, researchers Filipas and Ullman (2006) found that participants were more likely to develop PTSD symptoms when they experienced more revictimization and self-blame. Additionally, the previously mentioned Greening et al. (2002) study examined internal, stable, and global attributions following an earthquake and found that participants who exhibited such attributions were more likely to develop PTSD symptoms.

**Hypothesis 3**

My third hypothesis was that the association between stalking victimization and the hypothesized mediators (i.e., event-specific attributions and characterological self-blame) would be moderated by the length of the stalking episode, participants’ gender, and participants’ sex-role identity. More specifically, I predicted that there would be a stronger association between stalking victimization and both helplessness attributions and characterological self-blame when the duration of the stalking is longer and the victim has a feminine sex-role identity. Results indicated that the Stalking Frequency x Feminine sex-role identity was significant in the prediction of characterological self-blame. While I had predicted a significant interaction effect, a decomposition of the interaction at two standard deviations of the mean on feminine sex-role identity indicated
that the more feminine a participant was, the less likely the participant was to exhibit characterological self-blame following a stalking experience. These findings are in the opposite direction as my original hypothesis and are inconsistent with current research. Many studies have found a significant and positive relationship between femininity and characterological self-blame following a stalking episode. In a study on gender, Ullman and Filipas (2005) found that women were more likely to blame themselves following abuse than men were. These findings also suggested, however, that this was more likely when immediately following the abuse. Therefore, it is possible that the amount of time between the time of the study and the end of a participants’ stalking episode may have affected their perceptions on self-blame. In other words, had the study primarily focused on people who recently experienced stalking, there may have been a more positive relationship between a feminine sex-role identity and self-blame (Ullman & Filipas, 2005). However, it is important to consider the differences between gender and sex-role identity. While the Ullman and Filipas (2005) study suggest a gender difference, more research is needed to better understand the extent to which the results may extend to sex-role identity.

Additionally, the results of this study indicated that there was a significant and positive relationship between the length of the stalking episode and both stalking frequency and distress. These results suggest that a longer stalking episode may be significantly related to greater distress followed the stalking experience. This finding is consistent with research, including a study by Blaauw, Winkel, Arensman, Sheridan, and Freeve (2002). This study found that participants who experienced stalking for longer periods of time were more likely to develop negative psychological consequences. This
study also found that length was significantly associated with both the frequency and perceived distress from the stalking experience. These results therefore suggest that the length of the stalking episode may continue to be a factor worth examining to better understand the development of psychological disorders following stalking experiences. They may also be helpful in identifying psychological interventions for stalking victims.

Inconsistent with current research, results of the current study also failed to find a significant difference in gender or sex-role identity difference in stalking victimization or PTSD symptom development. Several studies examining trauma among men and women have found that despite men being more likely to experience a traumatic incident, women are more likely to develop PTSD symptomology (Breslau, Davis, Andreski, Peterson, & Schultz, 1997). Despite this study’s failure to find a significant relationship, results from other studies suggest that gender or sex-role identity has a significant impact on the way in which stalking is perceived. A study examining differences in perception for men and women intimate partner violence perpetrators and victims found a gender difference in assigning characterological or behavioral blame to their perpetrators. While men were more likely to assign characterological blame to women who were victims than women, both men and women also assigned a great deal of behavioral blame to victims of both genders (Anderson, 1999). These findings suggest that men and women may interpret the cause of the stalking situation differently, even though the current study failed to demonstrate similar results.

**Limitations**

While this study was intended to be a methodically refined version of the Fais et al. and Reiland et al. studies, there were several limitations that should be addressed. As
previously mentioned, this study had fewer participants than published studies of similar content. Given that there were 82 participants and stalking typically affects about 15% of men and women, a sample size of at least 200 might have yielded more significant and generalizable results than the current study.

Additionally, participants were pulled from a private, four-year institution in the Midwest. Consequently, the participants were primarily Caucasian, between the ages of 18-22, and hail from average to above-average socioeconomic statuses. These participants were also pulled from classes in which similar topics to this study are discussed including psychology and sociology. This sampling suggests that many of the participants may have had an intrinsic interest in this topic, and thus adversely affected the results. Furthermore, these classes primarily constituted of third and fourth-year undergraduate students with only a few first-year students as originally intended. This sampling marks a limitation in our ability to accurately measure the length of a stalking episode because an older college student would theoretically have experienced more stalking than a younger college student – a possibility that was not well represented within this sample.

My ability to study gender and sex-role identity might have also been affected by the number of women compared to men. The fact that there were 68 women and 14 men might have influenced the findings concerning gender and sex-role identity, particularly the significant interaction between stalking frequency and feminine sex-role identity within characterological self-blame.

Further limitations exist in the measure used to examine stalking victimization and stalking distress. This measure (the SHBS) assessed these variables by listing several
potential stalking behaviors and asking participants to rank the frequency of the behavior and the degree to which the behavior was distressing on a scale from 1 (hardly ever) to 10 (all the time) and 1 (not at all disturbed/scared) to 10 (extremely disturbed/scared), respectively. It is possible that participants ranked stalking items with a “1” for frequency to indicate that they had not experienced the behavior while others used “1” to indicate that they had experienced the behavior but fewer times. This was speculated because the instructions asked participants to indicate whether they have experienced stalking and to skip the itemized list of behaviors if they said “no.” However, there were more participants who indicated “1” for the list of behaviors than there were people who answered “no” to the dichotomous question. In other words, participants indicated that they had not experienced “repeated unwanted attention” but then endorse the specific stalking behaviors as a “1” rather than skipping the behavior list as the directions indicated. As a result, it is possible that the variables assessing stalking victimization (i.e., stalking frequency and stalking distress) were inflated.

Another potentially significant limitation existed in the way in which the PCL-5 is structured. The beginning of the measure asks participants to identify “the worst event” that has happened to them. Participants are then instructed to answer the itemized questions about PTSD symptomology with said event in mind. Therefore, it is possible that the ‘worst event’ participants identified was not one related to stalking but was actually an event unrelated to this study. This potential misalignment with the variables to the current study may explain the lack of correlation between stalking victimization and PTSD symptomology.
Directions for Future Research

Despite the increasing awareness and knowledge about intimate partner violence in general, stalking is arguably the most underrepresented form of intimate partner violence in research. This may be partially due to the challenge behind operationally defining stalking. While it is important to identify specific behaviors for research, stalking is loosely defined as any repeated and unwanted behavior that could make a reasonable person feel uncomfortable. Therefore, there are several different ways in which this behavior can manifest. With that being said, future research is not only necessary to methodologically refine the operational definition of stalking, but it should also include a comprehensive list of behaviors including modern technology (e.g. geo-filters, geo-mapping, social media, GPS devices, texting/emailing sexually explicit messages, etc.).

Much of the research in this area relies on self-reporting from participants. Therefore, intentional language about the specific behavior of interest may be necessary as some participants may not realize their experiences may constitute stalking.

Obtaining a more accurate operational definition of stalking may be more likely with additional research on stalking perpetration. Such research may also facilitate in identifying intervention methods in that it may help identify timelines or personality characteristics that could make a person more susceptible to experiencing or perpetrating stalking behavior.

Despite the vast number of people who experience stalking, more research on how stalking victimization affects individuals is still needed. This study aimed at better identifying factors that result in some victims developing PTSD symptomology and others do not. While the results suggest that the length of the stalking episode, the degree
to which the victim found the experiences distressing, and his or her sex-role identity
play a role in their psychological outcome, further information is needed to determine
whether such sequelae includes PTSD symptomology.
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APPENDIX A

Demographic Sheet

Please complete the demographic information on this page and then move on to complete the remainder of the questionnaire packet.

1. Age (circle): 18 19 20 21 22+
2. Gender (circle): Woman Man Other
3. Race (check one):
   __White
   __Other
APPENDIX B

PCL-5

Instructions: This questionnaire asks about problems you may have had after a very stressful experience involving actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence. It could be something that happened to you directly, something you witnessed, or something you learned happened to a close family member or close friend. Some examples are a serious accident; fire; disaster such as a hurricane, tornado, or earthquake; physical or sexual attack or abuse; war; homicide; or suicide. First, please answer a few questions about your worst event, which for this questionnaire means the event that currently bothers you the most. This could be one of the examples above or some other very stressful experience. Also, it could be a single event (for example, a car crash) or multiple similar events (for example, multiple stressful events in a war-zone or repeated sexual abuse).

Briefly identify the worst event (if you feel comfortable doing so):
________________________________________

How long ago did it happen? ____________________ (please estimate if you are not sure)

Did it involve actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No

How did you experience it?
   _____ It happened to me directly
   _____ I witnessed it
   _____ I learned about it happening to a close family member or close friend
   _____ I was repeatedly exposed to details about it as part of my job (for example, paramedic, police, military, or other first responder)
   _____ Other, please describe _____________________________
If the event involved the death of a close family member or close friend, was it due to some kind of accident or violence, or was it due to natural causes?

- _____ Accident or violence
- _____ Natural causes
- _____ Not applicable (the event did not involve the death of a close family member or close friend)

Second, keeping this worst event in mind, read each of the problems on the next page and then circle one of the numbers to the right to indicate how much you have been bothered by that problem in the past month.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the past month, how much were you bothered by:</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little bit</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>Extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Repeated, disturbing, and unwanted memories of the stressful experience?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Repeated, disturbing dreams of the stressful experience?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Suddenly feeling or acting as if the stressful experience were actually happening again (as if you were actually back there reliving it)?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Feeling very upset when something reminded you of the stressful experience?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Having strong physical reactions when something reminded you of the stressful experience (for example, hear pounding, trouble breathing, sweating)?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Avoiding memories, thoughts, or feelings related to the stressful experience?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Avoiding external reminders of the stressful experience (for example, people places, conversations, activities, objects, or situations)?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Trouble remembering important parts of the stressful experience?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>9. Having strong negative beliefs about yourself, other people, or the world <em>(for example, having thoughts such as: I am bad, there is something seriously wrong with me, no one can be trusted, the world is completely dangerous)</em>?</td>
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<td>10. Blaming yourself or someone else for the stressful experience or what happened after it?</td>
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<td>11. Having strong negative feelings such as fear, horror, anger, guilt, or shame?</td>
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<td>12. Loss of interest in activities that you used to enjoy?</td>
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<td>13. Feeling distant or cut off from other people?</td>
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<td>14. Trouble experiencing positive feelings <em>(for example, being unable to feel happiness or have loving feelings for people close to you)</em>?</td>
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<td>15. Irritable behavior, angry outbursts, or acting aggressively?</td>
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<td>16. Taking too many risks or doing things that could cause you harm?</td>
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<td>17. Being “superalert” or watchful or on guard?</td>
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<td>18. Feeling jumpy or easily startled?</td>
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<td>19. Having difficulty concentrating?</td>
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<td>20. Trouble falling or staying asleep?</td>
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APPENDIX C

BCSB (Modified #8)

Below is a list of beliefs regarding past harassment and stalking experiences. Please read each item, and then indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements with respect to your most intense stalking-related experience.

NOTE: If you have never experienced unwanted pursuit by another individual, please skip this measure and move on to the next.

Use the following scale to indicate your opinion:

1= Strongly Disagree  4= Slightly Agree
2= Mostly Disagree    5= Mostly Agree
3= Slightly Disagree  6= Strongly Agree

*Please indicate that you have never experienced behavioral harassment by circling 7 for each of the following questions.

1. It happened because of something I did.  1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. It happened because of the kind of person I am.  1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. It happened because I am unattractive.  1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. If I had done things differently, it wouldn’t have happened.  1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. It has nothing to do with the kind of person I am.*  1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. It wasn’t caused by anything I did.*  1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. It happened to me because of who I am.  1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. It happened because I am too passive to confront the stalker.  1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. If I were a different person, it wouldn’t have happened.  1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Note: * indicates reverse score items.
APPENDIX D

SHBS (Modified)

For each question (unless specified) please circle only one answer.

(1) Have you ever had a personal relationship (romantic or friendly), which has ended, where either you ended it or you were the predominant one in ending it?
(a) Yes
(b) No

(2) For whatever reasons have you ever had someone (known or unknown) give you unwanted attention MORE THAN ONCE either by letters, notes left for you, e-mails, phone calls, faxes, following you, attempts to approach you, driving by your home, sending you gifts, or finding information about you?
(a) Yes
(b) No

(3) Was this repeated unwanted attention conducted in a manner, which made you feel disturbed, intimidated, distressed or scared, to the point where it seriously disrupted your life and caused you to fear for your OR your family’s/partner’s/friend’s health?
(a) Yes
(b) No

If you answered no to all three questions 1, 2 and 3, you may skip to the EASQ-S.

If you answered “yes” to question 3 then please answer the rest of the questionnaire in reference to this one person. If you answered no to question 3 but yes to question 2 then please answer the rest of the questionnaire in reference to this one person. If you answered no to question 3 and 2 but yes to question 1 then please answer the rest of the questionnaire in reference to this one person.

Please circle one answer only
(4) Was or is this person
(a) Male?
(b) Female?
(c) Unknown?
(5) Could you please circle any behaviours that this person has performed and write down next to each behaviour how often it occurred in the first space provided on a scale of 1–10 where 1 is hardly ever, 5 is regularly and 10 is all the time. Then in the next column on a scale of 1–10 where 1 is not at all disturbed/scared and 10 is extremely disturbed, please write down how disturbing and scary such behaviours were for you.

Please rate the frequency and severity of the following events on a scale from 1 (hardly ever) to 10 (all the time) and 1 (not at all disturbed/scared) to 10 (extremely disturbed/scared), respectively.

Has this person? How often it occurred (1-10) How disturbed/scared (1-10)

a) Telephoned you at work
b) Telephoned you at home
c) Made hang-up calls
d) Tapped your phone
e) Left messages on your machine
f) E-mailed you
g) Written you letters
h) Left you notes
i) Written graffiti about you
j) Faxed you
k) Followed you on foot
l) Followed you by car
m) Driven by your home
l) Approached you in public
m) Come to your home
n) Knocked on door and fled
How often it occurred (1-10)  How disturbed/scared (1-10)

o) Come to your work/university
p) Spied on you
q) Sent flowers
r) Ordered something for you
s) Broken into your home
t) Stolen something of yours
u) Left things on your property
v) Injured or killed your pets
w) Damaged property of your new partner
x) Damaged your property
y) Stolen/read your post
z) Tried to discredit you
aa) Violated restraining order
bb) Attempted break into car
cc) Went through your garbage
dd) Threatened to cause self harm
ee) Threatened you
ff) Threatened your friends
gg) Threatened your family
hh) Threatened your partner
ii) Verbally abused you
jj) Physically harmed you
kk) Sexually abused you

ll) Harmed your new partner

mm) Boasted of the information they’d gained about you

nn) Threatened suicide

oo) Contacted you through Facebook or other social media

pp) Located you through information on Facebook or other social media

qq) Other (please specify)

(6) Were or are this person’s behaviours persistent and unwanted?
   (a) Yes
   (b) No

If yes then what was the length of time before you felt that this person’s attention to you was unwanted?
   (a) Straight away
   (b) A few hours
   (c) A few days
   (d) A few weeks
   (e) A few months
   (f) A few years

(7) Are these behaviours still continuing?
   (a) Yes
   (b) No
   (c) Unsure

(8) How many years of age were you when you noticed these behaviours occurring?

(9) How long did or have this person’s behaviour towards you last/ed for?
   (a) Less than 1 month
   (b) 1–3 months
   (c) 4–12 months
   (d) 1–3 years
   (e) More than 3 years (please specify) __________
(10) Has anyone else ever behaved like this towards you prior to this person’s behaviour?
(a) Yes
(b) No

(11) How helpless and vulnerable do/did you feel to this person’s behaviours and their threats?
 a) Not at all b) a little c) moderately d) very e) extremely
Please try to vividly imagine yourself in the situations that follow. If such a situation happened to you, what would you feel would have caused it? While events may have many causes, we want you to pick only one – the major cause if this event happened to you. Please write this cause in the blank provided after each event. Next we want you to answer some questions about the cause and a final question about the situation. To summarize, we want you to:

1. Read each situation and vividly imagine it happening to you.
2. Decide what you feel would be the major cause of the situation if it happened to you.
3. Write one cause in the blank provided.
4. Answer three questions about the cause.
5. Answer one question about the situation.
6. Go on to the next situation.

SITUATION: You experience a major personal injury.

1. Write down the one major cause ________________________________.

2. Is the cause of your personal injury due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)
   
   Totally due to other people or circumstances 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   Totally due to me

3. In the future when injured, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)
   
   Will never again be present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences personal injuries or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

   Influences just the particular situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   Influences all situations in my life

5. How important would this situation be if it happened to you? (circle one number)

   Not at all important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7   Extremely important
SITUATION: You are fired from your job.
1. Write down the one major cause _________________________________.

2. Is the cause of losing your job due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)
   - Totally due to other people or circumstances
   - Totally due to me

3. In the future when at work, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)
   - Will never again be present
   - Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences work or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
   - Influences just the particular situation
   - Influences all situations in my life

5. How important would this situation be if it happened to you? (circle one number)
   - Not at all important
   - Extremely important

SITUATION: After your first term at school, you are on academic probation.
1. Write down the one major cause _________________________________.

2. Is the cause of your academic probation due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)
   - Totally due to other people or circumstances
   - Totally due to me

3. In the future when at school, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)
   - Will never again be present
   - Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences academics or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
   - Influences just the particular situation
   - Influences all situations in my life

5. How important would this situation be if it happened to you? (circle one number)
   - Not at all important
   - Extremely important
SITUATION: Your best friend tells you that you are not to be trusted.
1. Write down the one major cause _________________________________.

2. Is the cause of your friend telling you that you are not to be trusted due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)
   Totally due to other people or circumstances
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Totally due to me circumstances

3. In the future when interacting with friends, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)
   Will never again be present
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences friendships or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
   Influences just the particular situation
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Influences all situations in my life

5. How important would this situation be if it happened to you? (circle one number)
   Not at all important
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Extremely important

SITUATION: You cannot sleep soundly.
1. Write down the one major cause _________________________________.

2. Is the cause of your poor sleep due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)
   Totally due to other people or circumstances
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Totally due to me

3. In the future when you cannot sleep soundly, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)
   Will never again be present
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences sleep or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
   Influences just the particular situation
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Influences all situations in my life

5. How important would this situation be if it happened to you? (circle one number)
SITUATION: You experience sexual difficulties.

1. Write down the one major cause

   Not at all important  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Extremely important

2. Is the cause of your sexual difficulties due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

   Totally due to other people or circumstances  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Totally due to me circumstances

3. In the future when you experience sexual difficulties, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

   Will never again be present  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences sexual difficulties or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

   Influences just the particular situation  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Influences all situations in my life

5. How important would this situation be if it happened to you? (circle one number)

   Not at all important  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Extremely important

SITUATION: You confront a serious conflict in your values.

1. Write down the one major cause

2. Is the cause of your conflict with your values due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

   Totally due to other people or circumstances  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Totally due to me circumstances

3. In the future when conflicted with your values, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

   Will never again be present  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences your values or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

   Influences just the particular situation  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Influences all situations in my life

5. How important would this situation be if it happened to you? (circle one number)

   Not at all important  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Extremely important
SITUATION: There are few recreational activities in which you are interested.
1. Write down the one major cause _________________________________.

2. Is the cause of your disinterest in recreational activities due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)
   - Totally due to other people or circumstances
   - Totally due to me

3. In the future when considering getting involved in recreational activities, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)
   - Will never again be present
   - Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences your interest in recreational activities or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
   - Influences just the particular situation
   - Influences all situations in my life

5. How important would this situation be if it happened to you? (circle one number)
   - Not at all important
   - Extremely important

SITUATION: Your Christmas vacation plans are cancelled.
1. Write down the one major cause _________________________________.

2. Is the cause of your cancelled Christmas vacation plans due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)
   - Totally due to other people or circumstances
   - Totally due to me

3. In the future when planning Christmas vacation, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)
   - Will never again be present
   - Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences ________ or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
   - Influences just the particular situation
   - Influences all situations in my life

5. How important would this situation be if it happened to you? (circle one number)
   - Not at all important
   - Extremely important
SITUATION: You have trouble with one of your instructors.
1. Write down the one major cause _______________________________________________.

2. Is the cause of your trouble with your instructor due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)
   Totally due to other people or circumstances 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Totally due to me circumstances

3. In the future when interacting with instructors, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)
   Will never again be present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences interactions with instructors or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
   Influences just the particular situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Influences all situations in my life

5. How important would this situation be if it happened to you? (circle one number)
   Not at all important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely important

SITUATION: You experience financial difficulties.
1. Write down the one major cause _______________________________________________.

2. Is the cause of your financial difficulties due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)
   Totally due to other people or circumstances 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Totally due to me circumstances

3. In the future when you have financial difficulties, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)
   Will never again be present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences finances or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
   Influences just the particular situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Influences all situations in my life

5. How important would this situation be if it happened to you? (circle one number)
   Not at all important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely important
SITUATION: Your attempt to capture the interest of a specific member of the opposite sex is a failure.

1. Write down the one major cause ________________________________.

2. Is the cause of your failure to capture the interest of the member of the opposite sex due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)
   - Totally due to other people or circumstances 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   - Totally due to me

3. In the future when attempting to capture the interest of the opposite sex, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)
   - Will never again be present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   - Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences capturing the interest of the opposite sex or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
   - Influences just the particular situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   - Influences all situations in my life

5. How important would this situation be if it happened to you? (circle one number)
   - Not at all important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   - Extremely important
APPENDIX F

Modified ASQ

If you have NOT experienced the following situation, please skip this measure and move on to the next.

SITUATION: “For whatever reasons have you ever had someone (known or unknown) give you unwanted attention MORE THAN ONCE either by letters, notes left for you, e-mails, phone calls, faxes, following you, attempts to approach you, driving by your home, sending you gifts, or finding information about you?”

A) On the line below, write down the one major cause of this situation.

CAUSE_________________________________________________________________

B) Think about the cause that you wrote down. Is it something about you or something about other people the causes this situation?

Totally caused by other people or circumstances 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Totally caused by me

C) Think about the cause you wrote down. Is it something that leads to negative outcomes in other areas of your life or just in this situation?

This cause leads to negative outcomes just in this situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 This cause leads to negative outcomes in all areas of my life

D) Think about the cause you wrote down. Will the case of this current situation be present in similar situations in the future?

This cause will never be present in similar situations 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 This cause will always be present in similar situations